

CD 2008 -- 67



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
FACULTY OF MUSIC

Thursday, October 16, 2008
12:10 pm. Walter Hall. Free

Thursdays at Noon

"A History of Time in Balinese Music"

Lecture by Michael Tenzer, Wilma and Clifford Smith Visitor in Music

Michael Tenzer is a musician whose interests span the globe and whose dedicated achievements cover all of the kinds of things musicians do: performance, composition, research, teaching and mentoring, analyzing, thinking and writing about music, promoting interest in the world's finest musics, and envisioning what can be done to best shape our future world of music.

Born in New York City in 1957, Tenzer was mainly self-taught until he studied music at Yale University (BA 1978), and then completed a PhD in music composition at University of California, Berkeley (1986). Since 1977 he has also lived on and off for five years in Bali, Indonesia, studying gamelan traditions. In 1988-89 he learned drumming and singing in South India. From 1986-1996 he taught music theory and composition at Yale, and since 1996 has been professor of music at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver. He accepted visiting appointments as Professor of Ethnomusicology at UCLA (2001) and the Robert Trotter Music Professorship at the University of Oregon (2006). Among his mentors are Simha Arom, Frank Bennett, Martin Bresnick, N. Govindarajan, Gerard Grisey, Andrew Imbrie, Madé Lebah, José Maceda, Wayan Suweca, and Wayan Tembres. Among Tenzer's students are composers Chris Burns and Derek Bermel, percussionist and scholar Sal Ferreras, and music editors Elizabeth Branch Dyson (University of Chicago Press) and Mary Francis (University of California Press).

Tenzer's compositions for chamber, solo and orchestral media have been performed in North America, Europe, and Asia, featuring performers such as Pandit Swapan Chaudhuri (tabla), Jane Coop (piano), Alex Klein (oboe) and Evan Ziporyn (clarinet). He has been commissioned and performed by groups ranging from the American Composer's Orchestra, the Chicago Symphony, and the Brooklyn Philharmonic to gamelan ensembles in Bali. Recordings are available on the New World, Canteloupe and Bali Stereo labels.

Tenzer's writings range from detailed studies of Balinese music to consideration of European art music's interaction with world music, the future of musical fusion, and world music theory. Prizes and grants include Koussevitzky and Canada Council commissions, Fulbright and National Endowment for the Humanities fellowships (USA), a SSHRC Research and Creation grant (Canada), the Sam Black award for Education and Development in Creative and Performing Arts, the ASCAP Deems-Taylor award and Alan P. Merriam Prize (for the University of Chicago Press book *Gamelan Gong Kebyar*) and the Robert Stevenson Prize (for a study of Filipino music pioneer Jose Maceda published in the journal *Ethnomusicology*).

Since the 1980s Tenzer has been one of the most important figures in the international gamelan movement and was the first non-Balinese ever to compose music performed by the Balinese gamelan in Bali. He has regularly produced influential compositions there since 1982, closely integrating the techniques of European modern music and Indian music into Balinese musical structures. These works have been cited by Balinese critics as "an important and unique contribution to our cultural heritage". The creation of his 2006 composition "Underleaf," realized in Bali with the Balinese Cudamani gamelan collective and a Canadian ensemble of wind, brass and piano, is the subject of "Gongs and Trombones", a 60 minute documentary commissioned by international TV5 and set for mid-2007 broadcast.

With Wayan Suweca and Rachel Cooper, Tenzer co-founded Gamelan Sekar Jaya in Berkeley (1979). As composer and lead drummer, he led them on their unprecedented first tour to Bali in 1985, which was the subject of the widely-seen television film "Kembali: To Return". The group still thrives today, and in 2000 was awarded the Dharma Kusuma Award for Cultural Service by the Balinese government, the highest such honor given. Currently Tenzer directs Gamelan Gita Asmara in Vancouver.

NEXT ON THURSDAYS AT NOON

October 30 - Brass with Class: Gillian MacKay curates a concert featuring the best of the brass solo repertoire, performed by members of the brass faculty.

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